[English]

Cotton Export Scam

5582. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Enforcement Directorate has currently investigated a major cotton export scam involving crores of rupees;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken or proposed to be taken aganst the cartel of traders; and

(c) the effective measures taken to bring this cartel to book and prevent such scam in future ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The Enforcement Directorate has taken up investigation of alleged over-invoicing of cotton exports. Action as warranted by the law is proposed to be taken.

(c) Strict vigil is kept by the Government through its enforcement agencies and action as envisaged under the law is taken as and when any contravention is detected.

Turicorin Port

5583. SHRI D.S.A. SIVAPRAKASAM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to declare the Tuticorin Port as Free Port; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). An advisory Committee set up to examine the desirability and feasibility of establishing a Free Port in India has recommended Goa as a suitable location for setting up of a Free Port. The Committee has also suggested Tuticorin as a suitable site for a second Free Port on the east coast. No definite time frame can be indicated for a final decision in this regard.

[Translation]

Export by Foreign Companies

5584. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether several foreign companies have entered into industry and trade of the country;

(b) if so, the details of such companies set up under the liberalised economic policy of the Government during each of the last three years;

(c) whether there has been any increase in the export from the country as a result of the above;

(d) if so, to what extent these companies have helped in the said increase in export and the country benefited due to entry of foreign companies in India;

(e) whether any assessment has been made or proposed to be made in this regard;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the foreign exchange earned as profit and sent outside India by these companies ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (g). Yes Sir, as per information available, 1540 cases were approved in 1993-94, 1997 cases were approved in 1994-95 and 2398 cases were approved in 1995-96. Of the above, only 63 cases are bound by an export obligation against the foreign collaboration approval. However, in view of the gestation time taken by the projects for starting commercial production, export performance reports are not available from the parties so far. As per information available from Reserve Bank of India, profit/dividend remitted by Indian companies having non-resident interest for the year 93-94 and 94-95 are as follows :

	(Rs. in Thousands)
1993-94	48,88,680/-
1994-95	18,35,941/-

[English]

Captive Coal Washeries

5585. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to allow the cement industry to set up captive coal washeries;

(b) if so, the number of coal washeries proposed to be set up by the coal based cement manufacturing units; and

(c) the details of the places where these coal washeries are proposed to be set up ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). A techno-economic study on coal washeries for cement industry conducted by the Ministry of Industry through Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Ltd. (CMPDI) has recommended setting up of five coal washeries at Sasti (Western Coalfields Ltd.), Dipika (South Eastern Coalfields Ltd.), Bina (Northern Coalfields Ltd.), Urimiri (Central Coalfields Ltd.), and Bhuabaneswari (Mahanadi Goalfields Ltd.). The Cement Manufacturers Association is negotiating with a Build-Own-Operate (BOO) contractor to set up a washery at Dipika for meeting the coal requirement of cement plants in Bilaspur cluster of Madhya Pradesh. Western Coalfields Ltd./Coal India Ltd. are proposing to set up another coal washery at Sasti, Maharashtra on BOO basis. At present, there is no concrete proposal from cement industry to set up the remaining three coal washeries.